

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 017586
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY NEA:RNEUMANN:BH

APPROVED BY NEA:RNEUMANN

S/S-O:JTHYDEN

-----110864 232109Z /64

P 232030Z JAN 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 017586

EXDIS - FOR ATHERTON USDEL NO. 4

FOL RPT PARIS 01930 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALL EC CAPITALS,
CAIRO, TEL AVIV, DAMASCUS & JIDDA DTD 20 JAN 78

QUOTE: S E C R E T PARIS 01930

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PEPR, FR, XF

SUBJ: THE MIDDLE EAST AT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING

1. DURING A JANUARY 19 MEETING WITH ELYSEE DIRECTOR
GENERAL FRANCOIS-PONCET, THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT WE
UNDERSTOOD FRANCE HAD OPPOSED AN EC DECLARATION
RESPONDING TO A LETTER FROM SADAT ASKING SUPPORT FOR
THE PALESTINIAN RIGHT TO SELF DETERMINATION. FRANCOIS-
PONCET SEEMED SOMEWHAT SURPRISED TO HEAR THIS. HE SAID
THAT THE POSITION OF THE ELYSEE WAS THAT FRANCE SHOULD
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NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE BUT THAT IT WOULD SUPPORT A
FURTHER EC DECLARATION ON THE QUESTION. HE ALLOWED
THAT PERHAPS ELYSEE THINKING HAD NOT GOTTEN DOWN THE
BUREAUCRATIC LADDER TO THE QUAI.

2. A CONVERSATION AT THE QUAI AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME
SEEMS TO CONFIRM FRANCOIS-PONCET'S SUSPICIONS OF BAD

COMMUNICATIONS. ACTING DIRECTOR OF NORTH AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, HENRI SERVANT, (WHO WAS THE FRENCH MIDDLE EAST EXPERT AT THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING) TOLD US THAT THE GERMANS HAD PROPOSED A FURTHER EC DECLARATION PRAISING SADAT'S PEACE EFFORTS. THE FRENCH DELEGATION HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE EC HAD MADE A STATEMENT AS RECENTLY AS NOVEMBER 22 AND ANOTHER STATEMENT NOW WOULD ONLY WEAKEN THE CREDIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EC STATEMENTS ON VARIOUS ISSUES. BESIDES, SERVANT ADDED, THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT PAY ANY ATTENTION TO ANYTHING THE EC NINE SAYS ON THE ISSUE AND THE FACT OF SUPPORT WOULD ONLY HAVE INJECTED ANOTHER ELEMENT OF ACERBITY INTO FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS. NO REAL DECISION WAS TAKEN (THE MATTER WAS DISCUSSED AT A RESTRICTED LUNCH NOT DURING A PLENARY) BUT EACH COUNTRY WAS LEFT TO CONSIDER ITSELF FREE TO RESPOND TO SADAT'S LETTER AS IT SAW FIT. A WORKING GROUP HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH COMING UP WITH A NEW DRAFT DECLARATION WHICH THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS WILL CONSIDER AT A LATER TIME.

3. FURTHER TO THE STATE OF FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS, FRANCOIS-PONCET TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE GOF WAS VERY MUCH ANNOYED BY BEGIN'S LIVE INTERVIEW ON FRANCE INTER RADIO JANUARY 11 IN WHICH HE HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF FRENCH POLICIES TO THE EXTENT THAT IT BORDERED ON
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MEDDLING IN FRENCH INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
HARTMAN UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE017586
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RNEUMANN:BH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780034-0451
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780133/aaaabbon.tel
Line Count: 96
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2cf924e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3729886
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE MIDDLE EAST AT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING
TAGS: PEPR, FR, XF
To: JERUSALEM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2cf924e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014